Uniform tax rates for tourists

*460. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has realised that the fundamental problem plaguing the tourism sector of the country is multitude of Central and State-level taxes resulting in loss of number of tourists to other countries such as China, Thailand, Singapore, Hongkong, Malaysia, etc;

(b) if so, what the Ministry proposes to do in co-ordination with the Finance Ministry and the State Governments to have a uniform taxation or single tax for tourists in the country;

(c) whether the issue had come up before the recently held State Tourism Ministers' Conference in March, 2005; and

(d) if so, what is the outcome of the discussions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Various taxes on tourism industry have an impact on the competitiveness of our destinations. The matter has been taken up with the Inter-State Council as most of the taxes fall within the purview of the State Governments.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The State Governments/Union Territories have been advised to rationalise tourism related taxes.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

International airport for Kolkata

3401. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Japan has offered to build a state of the art international airport for Kolkata;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's response thereto?